AFFAIRS. (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b). FCI has about 6.7 lakh M.T. of Foodgrains in its stocks which are more than 3 years old, fit for human consumption and about 1.32 lakh tonnes of damaged foodgrains which are not fit for human consumption. The state-wise details are given in Annexure *(See* Appendix 185, Annexure No. 15]

(c) The foodgrain stocks for Public Distribution system from FCI Depots are issued on the principle of First in First out. However, some State Governments were not lifting the entire quantity during the last few years due to which the stocks in FCI have piled up. Further, the stocks of rice purchased under relaxed specifications during the crop year 1997-98 were to be issued on over riding priority which has retarded the issue of old stocks.

(d) FCI has been directed to follow the principle of First In First Out (FIFO) vigorously while disposing the stocks of foodgrains under Targetted Public Distrbution System (TPDS)/ Other Welfare Schemes etc. FCI has also been directed to more the stocks of old rice from surplus states to deficit states for early disposal. Besides, Open Market Sale Scheme (OMSSD) of wheat has also since been undertaken. Some old stock of wheat conforming to PFA standard is expected to be disposed of under this Scheme. The stocks of foodgrains, which are not fit for human consumption are disposed off as animal feed, cattle feed, poultry feed etc. by offering to State Governments/firms registered with Food Corporation of India.

वनस्पति क्षेत्र के लिए तेल बोर्ड

673. **श्री डी.पी. यादव**: क्या खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या घरेलु खाद्य तेल उद्योग ने तेल और वनस्पति क्षेत्र में तीव्र विकास के लिए तेल बोर्ड के गठन की मांग की है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या सरकार इस मांग के अनुसार तेल बोर्ड का गठन करेगी ; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो कब तक और यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण है?

खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले के मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सत्यपाल सिंह यादव): (क) तेल और वसा इकॉनमी के विभिन्न क्षेत्रो में, जिसमें तेल निस्सारण और प्रसंस्करण उद्योग और तिलहनों की खेती भी शामिल है, बेहतर समन्वय और विकास हेतु तेल बोर्ड बनाने के लिए सरकार को भारतीय वनस्पति उत्पादक एसोसिएशन से एक प्रस्ताव/ज्ञापन प्राप्त हुआ है।

(ख) और (ग) प्रस्ताव की जांच की जा रही है।

Rise in Prices of Vegetables and Essential Commodities

674. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:
SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY:
SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:
SHRI GHUFRAN AZAM:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are abreast of the unprecedented rise in the prices of vegetables and other essential commodities like pulses, making them beyond the reach of common man;

(b) if so, the percentage of comparative rise in prices during the last six months;

(c) the reasons for rocketing prices of vegetables and other essential commodities;

(d) the measures taken by Government to bring down prices at par with those prevailing during the corresponding period of the last year and to make commodities available to consumers at reasonable prices; and

(e) whether Government propose to initiate stringent action against hoarders of essential items?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYAPAL SINGH YADAV): (a) and (b) A statement showing the variations in the Wholesale Price Index Numbers of selected essential commodities for the last six months is given in the enclosed statement *(see* below)

(c) The main reasons for the increase in the prices of vegetables and other essential commodities are decline ift their production due to adverse climatic conditions, non-availability of sufficient quantities in the international market for imports.

(d) and (e) The Government has accorded the highest priority to the control and stabilisation of prices of essential commodities. Apart from certain long term measures to increase the production of essential goods, imports of items which are in short supply like pulses and onions have been placed under DGL at zero percent import duty and duty on the import of edible oils has been reduced to 15 per cent from 25 percent in order to augment the total availability of these items. Export of onions and pulses has been banned. Some of the essential commodities like rice wheat, palmolein and kerosene are also supplied through the outlets of public distribution system at below market prices. Stringent actions are being taken against hoarders, black marketeers and other indulging in unfair trade practices under the Essential Commodities Act and Prevention of Blackmarketing and Maintenance of Supplies of Essential Commodities Act by the State/UT Governments.

Statement

Percentage variation in the wholesale Price Index Numbers for selected essential commodities for the last six months ending 14.11.98

Commodity	Percentage variation
Rice	12.2
Wheat	10.0
Gram	26.4
Arhar	46.8
Potatoes	85.9
Onion	218.5
Tea	2.1
Sugar	-0.4
Salt	0.7
Vanaspati	0.3
Mustard Oil	32.3
Groundnut Oil	11.6

Grievances of oil Mill Owners

675. SHRIMATI URMILABAN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS be pleased to state;

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "oil in "The .Sunday Times" (Ahmedabad edition) dated 8fh November, 1998;

(b) if so, the details and facts thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to sort out the grievances of the Oil mill owners?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS (SHRI SATYA PAL SINGH YADAV) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Oil millers in Saurashtra had protested against alleged restrictions placed by the Gujarat State Government on movement of groundnut, groundnut oil, stock control and prices of groundnut oil.

The Association warned that oil millers would resort to forceful export of groundnut oil after that date. In case the State Government termed the action of oil millers illegal, the association would be forced to go to court. The Association stated that if even after this, the Government adopted delaying tactics in the court, the oil millers would have no option but to declare a lockout in the mills.

The Gujarat Government has reported that under an Order issued on 31.3.1998 under the Gujarat Essential Articles (Licensing Control and Stock Declaration) Order, 1981, any sale[1] or movement of edible oils of teilseeds outside the State had to be intimated to the District Collector forty-eight hours in advance.

(c) The State Government held regular meetings with the oil millers/dealers Associations. Inspections were intensified to detect and curb malpractices. Every effort was made to detect tax evasion, as also to bring down the rapidly increasing prices to a reasonable level. A Committee of seven Ministers has been constituted on 14.11.1998 to discuss and resolve important, as well as suddenly emerging, issues of essential commodities.

कम उत्पादन के बावजूद प्याज का निर्यात

676. **श्री बलवन्त सिंह रामूवालिया**:

श्री बरजिन्दर सिंह:

क्या खाद्य और उपभोक्ता मामले मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि: